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TRENDS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROGRAMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CURRENT EMPHASIS UPON THE DISADVANTAGED CHILD. A STUDY OF THE CONCENTRATION OF EDUCATIONAL MEDIA RESOURCES.... PART I--EDUCATION OF THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED.

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TRENDS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM, SCHOOL ORGANIZATION, TEACHING METHODS AND MATERIALS, STAFF UTILIZATION, AND SCHOOL-COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS REFLECT THE NATION'S GROWING CONCERN FOR EDUCATION AND, PARTICULARLY, FOR THE EDUCATION OF DISADVANTAGED LEARNERS. NOW, INSTEAD OF THE TRADITIONAL EMPHASIS UPON THE STANDARD INCULCATION OF SUBJECT MATTER, THE CONTENT OF A DISCIPLINE IS SPECIFICALLY SELECTED AND STRUCTURED TO BETTER MOTIVATE THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT. AND, ALTHOUGH CURRICULUMS ARE INCREASINGLY THE RESULT OF COOPERATIVE PLANNING AT THE STATE, REGIONAL, AND NATIONAL LEVEL, LOCAL SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS MAY ADAPT CONTENT ACCORDING TO THE NEEDS AND CAPABILITIES OF THEIR STUDENTS. PRESCHOOL PROGRAMS, CULTURAL ENRICHMENT, MOTOR-ORIENTED APPROACHES, AND OTHER REMEDIAL AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCES ARE BECOMING AND INTEGRAL PART OF THE SCHOOL CURRICULUM. OTHER EMERGING PATTERNS INCLUDE THE PROLIFERATION OF THE NONGRADED SCHOOL WHICH MINIMIZES FAILURE EXPERIENCES AND ALLOWS EACH CHILD TO ACHIEVE AT HIS OWN RATE, EXTENDED DAY AND SUMMER PROGRAMS, AND GREATER VARIATIONS IN CLASS SIZE. AMONG THE CURRENT INNOVATIONS IN INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND MATERIALS IS AN INCREASED SENSITIVITY OF TEACHERS TO THE CULTURAL BACKGROUNDS AND PERSONAL NEEDS OF THEIR STUDENTS AND TO TECHNIQUES WHICH INVOLVE THE USE OF CONCRETE MATERIALS AND PROVIDE IMMEDIATE GRATIFICATION AND REINFORCEMENT. ALSO, PARAPROFESSIONALS AND TEACHING TEAMS ARE OFTEN UTILIZED WITHIN WHAT HAS BECOME "THE SELF-CONTAINED SCHOOL." FINALLY, PARENTS AND THE COMMUNITY IN GENERAL ARE BEING INCREASINGLY INVOLVED IN IN THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS. THIS ARTICLE IS APPENDIX A TO THE EDUCATIONAL MEDIA COUNCIL. A STUDY OF THE CONCENTRATION OF EDUCATIONAL MEDIA RESOURCES...PART I--EDUCATION OF THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED. FINAL REPORT. (LB)

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APPENDIX A

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A STUDY OF THE CONCENTRATION OF EDUCATIONAL MEDIA RESOURCES TO ASSIST IN CERTAIN EDUCATION PROGRAMS OF NATIONAL CONCERN

PART I: EDUCATION OF THE CULTURALLY DISADVANTAGED

May, 1967

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Office of Education
Bureau of Research

TRENDS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PROGRAMS ASSOCIATED WITH THE CURRENT EMPHASIS UPON THE DISADVANTAGED CHILD[1]

George W Denemark and Marion Metzow

It is the purpose of this paper to review the impact upon early childhood and elementary school programs of the current emphasis on educating the disadvantaged child. The impact is likely to be of major and pervasive significance, for the level of public concern for education in general and particularly for the education of the disadvantaged seems unparalleled. Clearly, education is on stage and squarely in the public eye. Our society is relying heavily upon its schools to cope with some of its most basic and perplexing problems. The task is an extremely complex and difficult one, for as Harold Taylor observed recently,

> The circumstances of contemporary American society are now making extreme demands that the educational system is not ready to meet. Demand for an education of quality for those who have until now been deprived of it, demand for the reconstruction of society from top to bottom in order to bring the fruits of an expanding economy in a post-industrial era to all of our citizens. The dimensions of the reconstruction reach from the establishment of equality in economic and social opportunities to the enrichment of the cultural and esthetic life of all citizens.[2]

While education at every level is undergoing re-examination and change the developments at the early childhood and elementary levels are of particular interest. It is these that shall be the object of our discussion in the pages which follow.

The national attention currently focused on educating the disadvantaged child has undoubtedly stimulated many school systems to develop programs to better meet the educational needs of such children. Thus one key development has been the initiation of programs with such an emphasis where none existed before. In some instances the success experienced with approaches developed

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[2]Harold Taylor, "The Need for Radical Reform," Saturday Review, XLVIII, November 20, 1965, p. 92.

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for programs directed toward the disadvantaged has been such that many of the ideas are being seen as relevant to the total program. This latter development will undoubtedly receive the enthusiastic support of many experienced educators who have long expressed the conviction that key elements of programs for the disadvantaged---elements like individualization, flexibility in use of time and space, closer school-community ties---have important contributions to make in the educational program of every child.

The Curricular Context of the Current Concern for the Disadvantaged Child

It is difficult and perhaps unnecessary to attempt to separate the changes in school programs that have arisen out of the new concern for the disadvantaged child from those which may be associated with the other major influence on teaching and learning of the current decade---the curriculum reform movement. In previous eras of curriculum development our schools have tended to reflect a single major emphasis, at least in theorizing about them if not in actual fact. Thus we have talked of our curriculum emphasis as "child-centered," or "society centered" or "subject-centered." The current educational scene appears to be distinctly different and excitingly so, for it seems to have brought to focus a renewed concern for the individual expressed through the rapidly developing programs for the disadvantaged while still retaining the emphasis upon a reexamination of the disciplines and a restructuring of subject matter begun soon after World War II. Thus we find ourselves in a period when the attention of many university scholars and classroom teachers continues to be trained upon the organized bodies of knowledge while some of their colleagues are at the same time emphasizing the school's need to better understand and reach the children of all social and economic sectors of our society. The possibilities for educational improvement that can stem from the melding of these two key elements in curriculum planning are exciting to contemplate.

While begun prior to the successful launching of the first Russian satellite in 1957 the concerns for the effectiveness of our schools and school curricula as expressed through a reexamination of the subject fields assumed major proportions at that point. This was especially true in the areas of mathematics and the physical sciences. The curricula of many elementary and secondary schools reflected a conventional and long outdated approach to knowledge that seemed largely unrelated to the scientific and technological advances of the twentieth century. Public unrest coupled with the growing concerns of educators and university scholars provided the impetus for a series of projects directed toward planning new course content and developing appropriately related instructional materials. Such projects were undertaken initially in the fields of mathematics, biology, chemistry, and physics, and later in economics, English, and other subject areas. These study committees and the curriculum materials which resulted from their efforts have become well known and have reached into thousands of classrooms here and abroad.

Although covering many different subject areas and stemming from a variety of organizational or institutional sources the projects undertaken have shared to a considerable extent a common emphasis upon the structure of the

discipline with which they were concerned. Rather than being content to consider information on an almost unselected basis the new curriculum projects focused upon the concepts, principles, "representative ideas," and methods associated with the disciplines. Generally, however, the projects proposed not the explicit study of the structure of a subject but rather the utilization by the teacher of such a structure to organize and select content and the intuitive sensing of that framework of concepts and principles by the student.

The emphasis during this period of important curriculum reform has, therefore, been largely centered around subject matter and its more efficient and systematic incorporation into the learning experiences of children and youth. However, the impact of a series of urgent social issues---issues relating to population mobility and dislocation, to racial segregation or integration, to the impact of urbanization on family life, the adequacy of job skills, etc. ---have made clear the necessity for educational programs to include a fundamental concern for people and the social problems their group life engenders. It is from such motivation that the support for programs concerned with the disadvantaged child has come. Thus the contemporary educational scene presents a uniquely promising combination of forces influencing curricular patterns and instructional practices in today's schools---a continuing concern for the structure, fundamental ideas and processes of the disciplines coupled with a new sensitivity to the individual and our need to fit educational programs to his needs and capabilities.

• Should educators prove successful in linking these two emphases they will be on the way toward solving one of our central and most perplexing curriculum issues. Too frequently the issue has been formulated in terms of an either-or choice between a conventional subject-oriented curriculum and an emergent interest-oriented one---between the value of stability or that of flexibility in the education of children. The current concerns in curriculum building for <u>both</u> the framework of relationships inherent in the subject matter studied and the shaping of specific learning experiences to the nature of the learner represents a development of fundamental importance and exciting potential. Clearly, schools cannot choose stability <u>or</u> flexibility, continuity <u>or</u> adaptability, enduring cultural values <u>or</u> urgent problems of contemporary life. Good education demands all of these components, not half of them.[3]

A Definition of the Disadvantaged Child

Before turning to a discussion of educational trends resulting from the current interest in the disadvantaged child it would perhaps be helpful to clarify the principal ingredients of disadvantagement as seen by those working in this field. The definition of cultural deprivation utilized by James Olson and Richard

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[3]George W. Denemark, "The Curriculum Challenge of Our Times," <u>NEA Journal</u>, December 1961. p. 12-14.

Larson seems to correspond closely with the points of view of many writers on the subject. It identifies four dimensions.

1. Language development. Underdeveloped expressive and receptive language skills will be evident among deprived kindergarten children, and will negatively affect their school achievement. Speech patterns will conflict with the dominant language norms of middle-class teachers, thus heightening the improbability of a successful start in school.

2. Self concept. An inadequate self-image may characterize children raised in a substandard environment. Self-doubt or insecurity may result in low school achievement and a lessened feeling of personal worth.

3. Social skills. The deprived child will have had minimal training in the conventional manners and social amenities accepted by his middle-class teachers. He will be unskilled in relating socially to his peers or to authority figures, and will lack ability to function effectively in a school group.

4. Cultural differences. Most deprived children will come from lower socioeconomic strata. Many will be members of minority group subcultures. Therefore, their behavior and beliefs may differ from those of the dominant groups in the schools, and will be less understood and accepted. [4]

With a top priority being placed on the more effective education of such children it is logical and important to ask what changes in schools are being made to accomplish this goal. Although changes are evident throughout the educational system from pre-school to collegiate levels, this paper is concerned only with those appearing in early childhood and elementary programs through grade six. The trends perceived seem to fall into one or another of the following five categories:

1) Changes in the content, scope and sequence of the curriculum

2) Modifications in the organization of schools and school programs

3) New developments in instructional methods and materials

4) Trends in instructional staff utilization

5) New relationships to other educative influences upon children

It should be made clear, however, that these divisions are identified for convenience in organizing our discussion of educational trends. They do not

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[4]James L. Olson and Richard G. Larson. "An Experimental Curriculum for Culturally Deprived Kindergarten Children," Educational Leadership. XXII, May 1965. p. 553-554.

represent discrete compartments of innovation for in pr ctice new priorities in educational programs are frequently reflected in new content, new instructional techniques and materials, new ways of organizing the school---in several or all of the categories we have listed above.

I. CURRICULUM CHANGES

One of the most important and pervasive curricular changes occuring in early childhood and elementary school programs is that associated with the earlier introduction of concepts and principles. This trend, associated initially with the curriculum reform movement growing out of curriculum studies initiated in a number of different disciplines seems also to have gained support from persons associated with the education of the disadvantaged. This philosophy essentially rejects the notion that early educational efforts should focus upon the provision of a storehouse of information with which students will begin to think at a later more mature stage. Instead it holds with Hilda Taba that. . .

> "Thinking and acquiring knowledge need not be separated. The data on the development of thinking indicates that the capacity of general and abstract thinking develops sooner than has been assumed by the usual sequence. Hence it is not necessary to amass knowledge with which to think later. . . It seems that while sequence and continuity are important in learning the sequence consists not so much in the succession of details in the various areas of knowledge as in the continuity of learning steps leading to the formulation of ideas and the use of cognitive processes."[5]

Support for a curricular approach which emphasizes fundamental ideas and processes is also found in the writings of Jerome Bruner. At one point he states

> "The basic ideas that lie at the heart of all science and mathematics and the basic themes that give form to life and literature are as simple as they are powerful. To be in command of these basic ideas, to use them effectively, requires a continual deepening of one's understanding of them that comes from learning to use them in progressively more complex forms. It is only when such basic ideas are put in formalized terms as equations or elaborated verbal concepts that they are out of reach of the young child. The early teaching of science, mathematics, social studies and literature should be designed to teach these subjects with scrupulous intellectual honesty but with an emphasis upon the intuitive grasp of ideas and upon the use of these basic ideas. A curriculum as it develops should revisit these basic ideas repeatedly, building upon them until the student has grasped the full formal apparatus that goes with them."[6]

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[5]Hilda Taba, Curriculum Development: Theory and Practice, New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, Inc., 1962, p. 188.

[6]Jerome Bruner, The Process of Education, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1963 p. 23.

Philip Phenix supports this same general view but qualified his position by advocating the selection of content which exemplifies basic concepts, or representative ideas as he calls them, rather than explicit teaching of these concepts. He holds that the most fundamental ideas are not appropriate as explicit content until a rather advanced stage of education has been reached because of their highly abstract nature. Instead, he proposes that the function of representative ideas at earlier stages of the learning ladder is that of guiding the selection of content so that it will exemplify the characteristic features of a subject or discipline.

An especially promising illustration of programs centering around this structured emphasis upon the basic concepts of a field is one in economic education conducted in the Elkhart, Indiana, schools under the direction of Purdue Professor Lawrence Senesh. For more than five years the schools have been offering a program to first, second, and third grade children which exposes them to the same basic concepts in economics that are taught in college level economics courses. The problems and illustrations utilized in the learning units are practical everyday matters relevant to the lives and interests of the children. They are used, however, to develop understanding of such basic economic concepts as the conflict between unlimited wants and limited resources, the concept of marginal utility, and the ideas of specialization and division of labor. Rather than focusing on skill development and recall types of learning this program and others like it are introducing concept learning early in the elementary grades. These concepts will be encountered again at several later points in the child's education but in a context of more complex problems with the objective of deepening insights into the principle involved.

This curricular emphasis upon the structure of the subject fields and upon basic principles, concepts and generalizations associated with those fields should not be understood to mean that the education of disadvantaged children (or any children) should be primarily of an abstract nature. Indeed, the weight of evidence in the current literature suggests that particular emphasis be placed upon the concrete in planning educational experiences for disadvantaged children. The point is rather that concrete illustrations, information and facts be utilized as a beginning point but quickly placed in a context of broader generalized meanings rather than left as discrete, fragmented learnings. Children are capable of perceiving relationships earlier than present programs provide and are more likely to retain learnings if undertaken in a context of broader meanings and patterns of meaning. One writer in the field of mathematics suggests that grades 3 to 6 are probably the best times to deal with abstract science and math concepts and that the ability of children of this age to deal with such abstractions is in many cases superior to that of high school age youth.[7]

A closely related trend is that toward greater acceptance of broad planning of curricula at state, regional, and national levels while retaining

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[7]William F. Johntz, "Mathematics and the Culturally Disadvantaged," in Educating the Disadvantaged Learner. (Edited by Staten Webster) San Francisco: Chandler, 1966. p. 573-75.

flexibility for a curricular decision at the local school and individual teacher levels. Such an approach provides for communication and cooperative planning between scholars, curriculum specialists, and teachers to indentify and organize the major objectives of the school program in terms of basic concepts and important generalizations. However, the specific content utilized to communicate those concepts and generalizations is open to planning and selection by the faculty group or individual teacher most directly associated with the learner. John Goodlad of UCLA in supporting this position notes that we have often tended to confuse the constants and the variables in the curriculum, making the constants the specifics to be taught. Instead he proposes that the generalizations, principles, and modes of inquiry which underlie such factual material be made the constants while the specifics be left to the selection of the teacher and thus become the curriculum variables. This view of curriculum development suggests that the specific learning content selected for use will vary---indeed must vary---according to a number of significant elements in the learning environment. These include the interests of individual students in the class, the background, experience, and "style" of the teacher, the nature of the community, and the cultural background and ethnic composition of its members, the learning resources available, and significant current events that may have captured the interest of students and parents alike.

Another trend evident in current curriculum development is that involving greater emphasis upon inquiry and discovery approaches and the fostering of understanding of the methods characteristic of different fields of study. It is especially important to note this trend because it is clearly counter to a narrowly conceived "cookbook" approach which might be mistakenly associated with the emphasis on structure and the need for order in the educational programs for the disadvantaged. The emphasis upon selectivity in content and a more tightly planned sequence of learning activities has been tempered, however, by an approach which emphasizes the stimulation of inquiry and exploration in relation to the materials, situations, and problems of likely interest to the student. Here, too, we find evidence of a healthy and promising blending of elements of stability and flexibility in curriculum planning for elementary schools.

The evidence of a "here and now" orientation among many disadvantaged children has caused curriculum planners to make greater use of the present to lead into broader more universal understandings. Again, it is important to note that educators are not advocating that experiences focus only on the immediate and familiar, but rather that they begin with such an orientation and move as rapidly as appropriate to less familiar but more broadly applicable situations. Persons working in the curriculum fields of the social studies, science, language arts, and others have generally agreed that programs effective with disadvantaged children must be based upon their environment and linked to real problems within it. As Muriel Crosby of the Wilmington Schools observed, the curriculum should be "rooted in use value for the children."

Although rooted in the immediate concerns and problems familiar to disadvantaged children, the curriculum is seen as maintaining high expectations and providing experiences which will help to improve the self image of the child.

A number of persons working with programs for the disadvantaged have urged that the content of learning and experiences be urban rather than suburban oriented, as has so often been t_ e of curriculum guides and textbooks. Attention to occupations, to housing, to transportation is recommended, handled in a context of interracial and interethnic groups.

A related curriculum development, as in the case of the Indianapolis Public Schools, is that which provides industrial arts and home economics or craft activity below the junior high school. Such an emphasis seems based upon a recognition that many disadvantaged children are motor oriented and that they learn more quickly and gain more satisfaction from activities which enable them to work with their hands as well as in verbal modes. This development, however, is seen as applicable not only to disadvantaged children but to elementary school children generally, for we are increasingly recognizing that different approaches to learning are necessary to better fit the range of children in school. It is increasingly apparent that different specific content, different media, and different approaches to learning may be needed along with different pacing of learning to fit properly learning experiences to individual children.

There is an attempt to encourage and motivate growth in reading and other language skills in all areas of the curriculum, while initiating study in those fields without dependence upon the conventional skills. Initial science study, for example, is often planned so as to emphasize the handling of specimens and other concrete materials and equipment and to minimize dependence upon written material. At subsequent stages, however, work in science as in other areas of the curriculum is planned so as to encourage the student's development of reading and other academic skills that will support success and achievement in an academic environment.

Another curricular emphasis is that placed upon cultural enrichment. Programs planned for disadvantaged children include trips to museums, to concerts, plays, and other community resources concerned with artistic and aesthetic value. Many programs, even those involving very young children, provide for field trips to the community and for the utilization of resource persons and programs brought to the school. A seeming neglect of the humanities associated with the curriculum emphasis following the Sputnik era seems to be corrected as a consequence of a growing recognition of the important need for many children growing up in urban inner core sectors to have broader contact with things of beauty and taste.

The utilization of camp and other outdoor education experiences is another curriculum dimension receiving emphasis in programs for the disadvantaged. Summer day camps, weekend camping experiences involving parents as well as children, and other programs which bring urban children in closer contact with nature, with growing things, and the out-of-doors all seem to contribute important learning dimensions.

An emphasis upon individualization is central to the thinking of most projects concerned with the disadvantaged child. There is more disposition to

provide for differentiation of learning experiences to match different backgrounds, interest levels, potentialities, and growth rates than is characteristic of our general elementary or pre-school programs. Particular attention is paid to helping each child develop his verbal ability, achieve an understanding of himself and others, broaden his environmental understanding, increase his intellectual understanding, and cultivate emotional and cultural resources.[8] These objectives have become an explicit part of the program in many instances rather than generalized statements of purpose without specific provision for implementation. With increasing frequency curriculum content, a broader range of instructional materials, and the utilization of teaching teams are combining to provide educational programs aimed at better fitting the child rather than forcing the child to fit the program.

One final development worthy of mention is that which views remedial and supplementary skill development experiences as a regular part of the curriculum at all levels of the elementary program, rather than viewing such activities as outside the context of the regular program and available only to those with severe learning problems. Educators in many communities urge remedial and skill building activities in reading, mathematics, language, and other fields of the curriculum provided for as a normal part of the regular program on the assumption that most if not all children in school will at some point be in need of some of these experiences. The curriculum should be so planned as to enable children to move in and out of these special centers or activities in accordance with their particular learning problems and needs.

In a number of school systems orientation centers are being established to help children adjust to the community and to catch up in certain dimensions of their intellectual and social development before they are placed in regular classrooms. Generally the length of time spent in such centers depands upon the needs, the strengths and weaknesses of each child. Such compensatory programs have tended to place particular emphasis on language development and on the development of a stronger more positive self concept in certain social skills.

In summarizing the trends in pre-school and elementary education which have been influenced by our current interest in the disadvantaged child we should remind ourselves that a number of the approaches identified are by no means new on the educational scene. Many were being advocated in the 1930's during the so-called "progressive" era in American education. As we have observed earlier, however, what is new is the present melding of these ideas with the recent emphasis upon intellectual development through the organization and structuring of the subject fields. If we are successful in maintaining this mixture in good proportion we are likely to experience exciting new gains in our educational venture.

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[8]Helen Mackintoch, Lillian Gore, and Gertrude Lewis. Educating Disadvantaged Children Under Six. Washington: U. S. Government Printing Office. 1965. p. 4-15.

II. EMERGING ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERNS

A number of developments relating to the organization of school programs have been fostered by or have at least paralleled programs for the disadvantaged. As is true with most of the curricular emphases identified earlier, few if any of these ideas are new. Rather they have received new impetus from the concern for education of children across a broader range of social and cultural levels.

One of the most significant of these organizational developments is the incorporation of the pre-school or nursery program into the regular public school system. Nursery school education in the United States has been largely a privately financed and administered operation. Except for day care centers where children in attendance were those whose mothers found it necessary to work, children in pre-school programs were generally those from family and neighborhood environments which already provided them with many of the opportunities important to school success. Recent experience, however, has caused us to conclude that the disadvantaged segment of our population can benefit especially from opportunities provided by a well planned program of early childhood education. This recognition, coupled with the availability of federal funds for this purpose, is causing a number of communities to introduce or reestablish educational programs under public auspices for children in the three to five year old range. It is ironic that we have just concluded an era when the financial pressures on schools and communities were often such that programs in early childhood education were abandoned in order to make the funds and the physical space available for older children. Now we are once again recognizing that these programs of early childhood education are not a frill but provide many children with an important and necessary dimension to their educational and intellectual development.

It was pointed out in the 1965 White House Conference on Education, however, that giving the deprived child a quick "one shot" pre-school opportunity simply is not enough. There is considerable evidence to indicate that the advantages of such an experience are quickly lost if not followed up and built upon. This would suggest the need for articulating these pre-school activities into the regular elementary program and possibly developing early childhood centers that will view the development of children over a longer span of time, with particular emphasis on facilitating their adjustment to an ongoing program of elementary and junior high school education.

In Chicago and many other communities arrangements have been made for what is referred to as a continuous development program. Such programs extend into the intermediate grades and continue a de-emphasis on failure and a greater emphasis upon achievement at an individual rate. The programs, rather than retaining a tightly graded concept with fixed achievements expected before the child is advanced to the next level instead

attempt to view the child's progress in the context of his own potential and to provide an extended block of time to accomplish the desired results.

Many communities have for some time been utilizing multi-graded or non-graded approaches to early elementary education in support of their recognition that different children may move at different rates through a developmental sequence of language and other skills basic to the school program.

Another significant organizational trend has been that involving greater attention to the continuity of educational experience, pre-school through college. This emphasis is largely associated with the approach to curriculum planning which emphasizes basic ideas and concepts which have relevance to the education of young children as well as young adults. There seems to be much more disposition to look beyond the immediate level for which the observer has special concern and to see the implications for what is being done at other levels and the contributions of all to the effective education of the individual.

Variations in class size represent another significant current development associated with the concern for educating the disadvantaged. Most experienced teachers in this field emphasize the necessity of reduced class size to enable more attention and a more individualized approach to children. In some cases reduction in class size can be accomplished without reference to other modifications. More often than not, however, it is accompanied by a recognition that the variety in learning experiences supports variation in the size of learning groups. Small groups can sometimes be achieved where appropriate by arranging for larger groups in relation to objectives that can be accomplished through their use. Sometimes children are brought together in large audience type situations to view television demonstrations, films, etc. of broad interest. In other cases they are divided into small discussion or reporting groups or even smaller remedial and tutorial groups for special skill activities. In still other instances arrangements may be made so that students may study independently with teacher conferences at those points where the child requires special assistance in order to proceed.

Another developing organizational pattern is one which attempts to divide a large school population into sub units in order to facilitate better communication and contact among students and teachers. One such approach is the "school within a school" plan where a large elementary school may have its student and teacher population subdivided into three or more heterogeneous groups with block programing of each of these groups so that there are better opportunities for the children and teachers to know one another.

Two additional organizational developments associated with many programs for the disadvantaged have been extended school day activities and the extension of summer programs, particularly those for younger children. Both extensions of the school program reflect a growing

recognition that children may benefit from learning activities of a quite different nature than those scheduled during the regular school day or year. Evening recreational and hobby activities, Saturday trip and enrichment experiences have much to contribute beyond simply keeping children off the streets. Extended summer programs may provide fine opportunities for urban inner city children to have first-hand contact with outdoor recreation and with science and nature study materials, as well as with supplementary conventional academic studies. There is oftentimes a flexibility about summer study that enables the planning of special experiences associated with hobbies, mechanical or craft activities that would be difficult to schedule during the regular school year.

The organizational changes stimulated by a concern for educating the disadvantaged all seem to move in the direction of greater flexibility in the organization of the school and a greater capacity to modify its structure to different learning tasks and different levels of accomplishment.

More flexible use of time and space is fundamental to the approaches of many school systems in the education of disadvantaged children.

III. DEVELOPMENTS IN INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS AND MATERIALS

Basic to most of the new approaches to teaching the disadvantaged has been an enhanced understanding of the sociological, economic, and cultural backgrounds of these children. Educators have come to realize that the difference between the social and cultural backgrounds of teachers and those of the children they seek to teach often present serious barriers to effective teaching and learning. Often teachers come from middle class backgrounds and bring those values and behavior patterns to their teaching while the children they seek to influence come from lower class backgrounds and tend to behave differently and value different things. A broad range of activities have been initiated by school systems to facilitate greater sensitivity of teachers to the social backgrounds of children from other ethnic and social class circumstances. These include exchange programs with teachers from Puerto Rico or other sources of recent in-migrant groups, Teacher Corps interns living in the inner city during their training period in order to gain first-hand knowledge of the environments of the children they will teach, in-service education programs for classroom teachers emphasizing background factors, greater communication between classroom teachers and social service personnel cooperating with the schools, etc.

All of the efforts at enhancing the understanding by the teacher of the backgrounds of his children suggest the possibility of an approach to teaching which is sensitive to the feelings and needs of each child. The approach demands closer identification of the teacher with pupils, involves a more deliberate effort to express interest and concern over the personal concerns of the child, and a greater willingness to take time to counsel

and advise students, viewing this as a legitimate and important part of the school program rather than as a departure or deviation from the assigned obligations.

The concern for better teacher understanding of the background of the students he teaches has resulted in important modifications in the approach to their task which many teachers employ. Describing a teaching strategy for culturally deprived students, Professor Ausubel of the University of Illinois summarized his point of view as follows:

> "... the learning environment of the culturally deprived child is both generally inferior and specifically inappropriate. His cumulative intellectual deficit, therefore, almost invariably reflects, in part, the cumulative impact of a continuing and motivational reaction to this environment. Thus much of the lower-class child's alienation from the school is not so much a reflection of discriminatory or rejecting attitudes on the part of teachers and other school personnel ---although the importance of this factor should not be underestimated; it is in greater measure a reflection of the cumulative effects of a curriculum that is too demanding of him, and of the resulting load of frustration, confusion, demoralization, resentment, and impaired self-confidence that he must bear. An effective and appropriate teaching strategy for the culturally deprived child must therefore emphasize these three considerations: (a) the selection of initial learning material geared to the learner's existing state of readiness; (b) mastery and consolidation of all ongoing learning tasks before new tasks are introduced, so as to provide the necessary foundation for successful sequential learning and to prevent unreadiness for future learning tasks; and (c) the use of structured learning materials optimally organized to facilitate efficient sequential learning. "[9]

Ausubel's emphasis upon structure and sequential order in teaching method and material development parallels that described earlier in curriculum design. While a broader range of experiences, teaching approaches, and materials are being employed there is more attention being given to the rationale for these and the expected outcomes for each.

The experience of many teachers working with disadvantaged children suggests the need for teaching methods which provide more immediate gratification and reinforcement and which emphasize short range goals clearly obvious to the students. An important element is that of feedback, including verbal recognition, written analysis of the student's work, individual conferences, etc.

As mentioned earlier, approaches which utilize concrete objects and materials seem to be especially effective with disadvantaged children,

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[9]David P. Ausubel. "A Teaching Strategy for Culturally Deprived Pupils: Cognitive and Motivational Considerations," School Review. LXXI. Winter 1963. p. 454-455.

particularly at the beginning stages of their learning in a field. The utilization of models, the demonstration of processes and the use of other concrete visual materials seems important to effective teaching.

Especially promising has been the recent development of a broader range of materials of instruction developed in terms of different levels of difficulty and, in some cases, differentiating between the kinds of skills required. A greater variety of media available for the classroom teacher helps to support a broader and more flexible approach to teaching and learning. Materials are being developed which de-emphasize the mere communication of facts or recall kinds of information and instead focus on concepts and generalizations and encourage the practice of problem solving techniques. A recent interest in programed learning has encouraged a more careful analysis of the structure of many learning materials and the reorganization of textbooks and other instructional materials to clarify their objectives and establish a more thoughtful sequence of learning steps in relation to them.

Another important development in our concern for the disadvantaged is the development of new textbooks, library books, and instructional materials which meaningfully portray minority, racial, and ethnic groups. As U. S. O. E. Commissioner Howe pointed out recently,

> "The world of 'Look Jane, look' usually is a white suburban world. . . . Daddy goes off to work each morning and returns each evening; mother stays home with her children and her pretty house and well kept green yard. What relevance does this scene have to the child of the city whose mother works outside the home, whose yard is the street. The world presented is completely alien, its elements bear no relationship to every day existence in the city."[10]

Fortunately, instructional materials departing from these stereotypes are now being produced by some publishers and are available to those school systems that wish to benefit from them.

An important methodological trend relates to greater emphasis upon working with children individually or in small groups rather than in total class groupings. Lack of self confidence and a lack of some of the conventional communication skills among many disadvantaged children often prevent them from operating effectively in large groups. The opportunity to work more intensively with a teacher or other instructional team member may greatly facilitate the learning of such children, for not only can it focus help directly at the point of their learning difficulty but may enhance their sense of worth and their willingness to try without fear of a public confrontation of their mistakes.

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[10] Milwaukee Journal, August 23, 1966.

Another promising development is the utilization of remedial teachers as a part of the regular program rather than viewing remedial efforts as appropriate mainly for a small group of children who are having major difficulty with reading or some other aspect of the curriculum. Every classroom teacher may be engaged in some form of remedial activities appropriate to each learner as well as having remedial teachers assigned to regular instructional teams with time allocated on a regular basis for work with children having skill development needs. School of Education students at the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee are assigned to such remedial teachers in Milwaukee elementary programs in order to gain experience in working with children in a tutorial relationship as well as providing additional staff resources for listening to children read, reviewing theme corrections, etc.

A similar emphasis upon counseling is a noteworthy current development. Classroom teachers are seeing counseling of students as a part of their regular responsibilities. More counseling specialists are being prepared and being made available to elementary schools to work with children who have serious problems of guidance and adjustment. Once again, efforts are being made to integrate the activity with the main stream of the instructional program of the school rather than viewing it independently.

IV. TRENDS IN INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF UTILIZATION

While not a development exclusively the product of programs for the disadvantaged, increasing differentiation of teacher role has been associated significantly with such programs. The problem of the self-contained classroom seems nowhere more acute than where the teacher is working with disadvantaged children. Here the demands of individualization, the demands for remedial kinds of activities, the demands for counseling and personal relationships with children are such that a single teacher is unlikely to find it possible to meet them. The alternative need not be that of fragmenting the elementary school program into bits and pieces that correspond with subject areas. Instead a strong element of integration and continuity may be retained through utilization of instructional teams of teachers, supporting specialists and aides. The concept of an experienced career teacher coordinating and managing a range of instructional resources, including professional and sub-professional colleagues, is an important and exciting one for the education of the disadvantaged and the education of all elementary children as well. This approach suggests the idea of a self-contained school rather than a self-contained classroom, for it is based upon the utilization of teachers with different groups of children and in different relationships to them. It suggests the possibility of each elementary teacher developing an academic specialty, not in order that the curriculum will be divided according to these specialties with a teacher working in only one such field, but rather that they be available as resources to work with groups of children or as consultants to other classroom teachers as circumstances warrant. Such an arrangement

would provide a wider range of resources within a school faculty to enable deployment of instructional personnel in a more flexible rather than a less flexible fashion.

But the concept of specialties for teachers and the differentiation of teacher roles need not be restricted to subject field specialties. Recent analyses of teaching have identified many important roles which teachers play. These include those of curriculum developer, evaluator, community relations worker, counselor, tutor, researcher, and many more. Such a differentiation of teacher roles might enable teachers with special competencies and backgrounds in one or another of these fields to play a larger role in that area, depending upon one of their colleagues with competencies in another field to assume leadership there. Still another dimension of teacher specialties may be seen in the variations in the modes or methods of instruction that various teachers employ and that different learning tasks require. Clearly, some individuals are better fitted for television teaching than others, some for discussion group leadership, some for demonstration of processes or manipulating apparatus or materials. Some may be especially suited for work with individual students while others are more effective in formal large group activities.

We seem to be moving toward a recognition that good teaching does not mean only one approach or some ideal combination of a fixed variety of approaches. Instead we are encouraging the development of special strengths in each teacher and then seeking to link these together in school staffs or instructional teams. As Miller observed, "There is no one best type of teacher, nor one all-purpose teaching approach. Teachers have to be permitted more independence, more scope, and more initiative."[11] And Frank Riessmen concurred, noting that "There appear to be many types that function well with low income youngsters. Teachers succeed in different ways; there are many roads to Rome."[12]

Educators have long emphasized the importance of individual differences among children and yet have tended to neglect this same point among teachers, both in preparing them and in selecting them for their teaching assignment. Recent programs for disadvantaged children indicate that there are important variations among children as individuals and as members of different cultural groups, differences which may respond best to widely different teaching styles. We may soon reach a position where we will not only recognize that teachers of disadvantaged children may need different approaches and qualities but further, that among such teachers it may be desirable to provide deliberately for a range of competencies

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[11]S. M. Miller. "A Search for an Educational Revolution," in Urban Education and Cultural Deprivation (Edited by C. W. Hunnicutt). Syracuse: Syracuse University, 1964.

[12]Frank Riessman. "Teachers of the Poor: A Five Point Plan," Ibid.

and styles in order to make possible the combination most likely to stimulate each individual child in the group.

More imaginative use of qualified part-time personnel is another promising development that will likely be expanded in the near future. The statistics on the loss of young women to the teaching profession because of marriage and childbearing are dramatic. In some cases one-half of the young women prepared by a college for elementary teaching do not teach at all or perhaps do so for only a year before they marry and begin rearing a family. The increased needs for individual attention, for remedial and tutorial kinds of activities associated with education of the disadvantaged suggest a need for dramatic increase in the number of staff persons available.

The use of para-professionals, persons with training for specific and limited instructional responsibilities might further enable more effective utilization of the master or career teacher. These assistants might be available for listening to children read, for reading or story telling with other children, for playground and lunchroom duty, for the production of instructional materials, for routine clerical tasks, and for other such duties. Recently the National Commission on Teacher Education and Professional Standards sponsored a series of regional conferences and a publication, "The World of the Career Teacher," focusing attention on the need for differentiating teacher roles. The object of such differentiation is to make the job of the teacher more manageable and thus enable teaching to be better linked to the interests, needs, and potentialities of each child.

V. DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER EDUCATIVE INFLUENCES

A renewed rather than a new emphasis upon the relationship of schools to other educative influences upon the child is a significant trend of our times. We are recognizing that schools are but one among many educative influences upon our children and frequently a less effective influence than some others. Clearly, the influence of parents is and should be central in the social and intellectual development of a child. Recognition of this key influence upon disadvantaged children has caused many projects to move in the direction of involving parents in educational programs for children. For example, pre-school programs in many child care centers have attempted to involve parents in educational programs as aides and as resource persons. Special learning experiences for parents have been provided to help them better understand and support the objectives of the school. Efforts are being made in many school systems to develop more effective communication with parents, through meetings, newsletters, camping experiences, etc.

Samuel Shepard, Jr. of the St. Louis Public Schools has suggested a number of concrete ways in which the schools should work to help overcome the ill effects of cultural disadvantage on parents.

1) make available on extra-school time its buildings and personnel;

2) conduct adult-education courses;

3) make extensive and repeative efforts to contact parents and show by action as well as words that the school respects them, wants to help them improve themselves as well as their children, and has a program especially designed for them as adults;

4) provide information to parents relative to social services and responsibilities, work opportunities, simple and workable child-rearing practices;

5) provide information on family budgeting and the responsibilities of good citizenship---especially the importance of voting; and

6) stress the importance of hygienic health practices. [13]

The community school concept developed in the 1930's is once again becoming popular, but now in an urban context. There is growing realization that the problem of education is not simply one of training children but largely a problem of developing a community supportive of desirable values and practices. Schools are beginning to become involved in activities associated with problems of health, housing, and economic well-being, as well as with an emphasis upon how families can help themselves. Community resources are being utilized in instructional programs in a greatly expanded fashion.

CONCLUSION

Our society's current emphasis upon educating the disadvantaged child is having important, pervasive effects upon the early childhood and elementary school experiences of every child. American schools are different and will change further as a consequence of the insights gained from work with culturally deprived children and their parents. Curriculum content and design, school organization, teaching methods and materials, teacher utilization, school-community relationships---all are undergoing changes as we seek to provide learning experiences that help each child become more nearly what he is capable of becoming.

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[13] Samuel Shepard, Jr. "Working with Parents of Disadvantaged Children," Ibid. p. 48.